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MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS EXCALIBUR™

FEATURING: **SHADOW-CAT**



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3 MORE
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FEATURES!**

MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS™

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LETTERER — Tim Harkins
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"DARK SHADOWS" — PART 2 OF 8

Is there life after the Loonies? Shadow Cat discovers the answer when she's forced into deadly confrontation with Cat Shadow!

"GREAT CAT IN THE CITY OF GOLD" — PART 20 OF 25

When you look at the splash page of Johannesburg, resplendent in illuminated golden architecture, you'll probably figure you've missed a chapter of Panther's Quest. But you haven't. The Great Cat has left the dusty township and prowls the wealthy, glittering city in search of prey!

"GRAND CENTRAL STATION" — PART 7 OF 10

Coldblood's internal computer completes the narration of Lt.-Col. Eric Savin's past. After being murdered by Mako, Savin was brought back to life as Coldblood-7, the first successful fully functioning cyborg — at the hands of cyber-surgeon Gina Dyson, who later freed him. Meanwhile, Mako faces a reception for his secret masters and, needing to produce his cyborg, he dangles the captured Gina as bait. Coldblood bites...

Shiro Yoshida is a student in Japan. Occasionally, when time and inclination permits, he uses his mutant abilities to wield the powers of atomic flame. He's very good at it ... just ask him.

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NEARBY...

THO, WHAT DO WE DO
WITH THE RETHT
OF THEM?

WHERE WERE YOU WHEN WE
PLANNED ALL THIS,
BILLY BIRD?

HEEE-
HEEE!

ANOTHER LOONY
HEARD FROM!

YOU TOO,
TAILGUNNER?

DO I HAVE TO
TELL YOU GUYS
EVERYTHING?

PUB-A-DUN-
I GUESS SO,
GUIMS!

THIS SHOAH
IS FUN, EH,
COCKBURN?

AH, SAY, IT
SURELY IS,
SOUTHPAW!

PUB-A-DUN-
THAT'S ALL
FOLKS!

COULDN'T
HAVE THAID
IT BETTER
MYSELF, YOU
HAM!

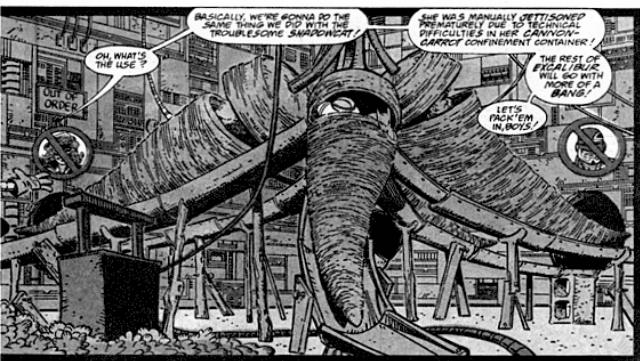
C'MON! OUT OF THE
WAY! OUT OF
THE WAY!

I LIKE TO
DO THINGS
FAST!
HEEE-
HEEE!

I WON'T
LET YOU
DOWN!

I'VE SEEN TO
EVERYTHING--
EVEN HOOKED
UP THE
DETONATOR
MYSELF!

YEAH,
BOOM!
WORK!







I DON'T RECKON
THE BOSS WOULD
LIKE TO HEAR YOU
SAY THAT!

WE'LL JUST
BE GLAD TO
KNOW EVERYTHING
GOING TWO THROOGLY!

PUB-A-DUB...
I'LL SAY!



I AM YOUR
DARKHT
NIGHTMARE!

AND YOU
ARE NO MORE
THAN A BIRD
IN A CAGE!



NO PROBLEM! I'LL
JUST PHASE OUT
OF HERE!

WAIT A MINUTE!
I SHOULDN'T
BE SOLID NOW
ANYWAY-- NOT WITHOUT
CONCENTRATING
ON IT!

MAYBE... MY
POWERS
HAVE RETURNED
TO NORMAL!

HEMM...
GUESS
NOT!



CAN'T SEEM
TO PHASE
AT ALL!



EVEN THOUGH
SOMETHING'S WRONG
WITH MY POWERS, CONTACT
WITH THE PUTTY TAT HERE
SEEMS TO HAVE DISRUPTED
HIS SYSTEMS--

--WHICH MEANS HE'S
OPERATED BY SOME SORT
OF SOPHISTICATED
COMPUTER ELECTRONICS!

THUFFERING THQUARSH
AND TURNIPTH -- OR
THOMETHING LIKE THAT!

UH-OH! SOMETHING
TELLS ME I MADE
PUSS 'N' BOOTS
PRETTY MAD!

HE LOOKS
LIKE HE'S
ABOUT TO
LUNGE--BUT
HE'S NOT
MOVING!

THE NAME 'TH
ROCKE TATER...

...AN' I'M NOT
WEARING AN'
BOOT-TH!

IT-TH EATHIER
FOR MY CLAWTH
TO GET AT YOU
THITH WAY!

WISH I COULD FIGURE
OUT WHAT'S GOING
ON HERE!

LAST THING I
REMEMBER--WE WERE
ATTACKED AT THE
LIGHTHOUSE!

HE'S CHANGING!

SOMEHOW,
MY POWER IS
LATENT WITHIN ME--
AND HE'S SUFFERING
THE SIDE-EFFECTS.

WHAT-TH MATTER?
DID I HURT LITTLE
KITTY-BIRD?

RIPPP





HE'S OUT LIKE
A LIGHT!

THERE, THERE.
NICE KITTY.

NOW... I'VE GOT
A LOT OF FIGURING
TO DO, BEGINNING
WITH--

WHAT'S
THIS?

NOW CUT--
THAT OUT--



EARRINGS? YUCK! I'D NEVER
WILLINGLY WEAR ANYTHING
LIKE THESE!

SOMEONE MUST
HAVE PUT THEM
ON FOR A
REASON--

--AND THAT
MUST BE TO
TAMPER
WITH MY
ABILITIES!

LET'S SEE WHAT
HAPPENS WHEN
I GET THEM
OFF!



THERE!

EVERYTHING'S
BACK TO
NORMAL!

I'M
WALKING
ON AIR!



BUT, WHOEVER'S RESPONSIBLE
FOR THIS WON'T BE--



...ONCE I GET MY
HANDS ON HIM!

CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE...

PANTHER QUEST

PART XX
STARRING:
THE BLACK
PANTHER

"If the black fantasy started to merge with white reality, what would be left of apartheid? And then who would rule?"

-- from Joseph Lelyveld's "Move Your Shadow," published by Times Books, Random House, Inc.

THE GREAT CAT IN THE CITY OF GOLD

THE CITY GLISTENS LIKE
THE GOLD THAT BROUGHT
IT INTO EXISTENCE, GOLD
LOVINGLY POLISHED AND
CHERISHED.

JOHANNESBURG'S EDIFICES AND STRIKING
SPIRE SCINTILLATINGLY IGNORE THE DIRT
AND SWEAT AND BLOOD THAT IT TOOK
TO RISE THE PRECIOUS ONE FROM THE EARTH.

STREET LAMPS REFLECT
OFF SKYSCRAPER WINDOWS
IN MOISTEN GLASSES--

--BRIGHT AS
NEW HOPE.



THE GREAT CAT VIEWS
THE GOLDEN AND
ELECTRIC GLAMOUR--

--AND IS DISTURBINGLY
AWARE THAT IT IS MEN
LIKE ZANTI CHIKANE
WHO MAKE ALL THIS
POSSIBLE BY DESCENDING
INTO DARK CAVERNS--

--MEN WHO
ARE RESTRICTED
TO LIVING IN
CROWDED, UN-
ADORNED ZINC
HOMES THAT MANY
TIMES HAVE NO
ELECTRICITY.

THE ELECTRONIC ELEGANCE OF THE GOLDEN
CITY THRUSTS UP FROM THE FLATLANDS
ALMOST IN FURIOUS DENIAL OF THE ARID
STRETCHES THAT SURROUND IT.

MORE SUBTLY, ALSO A DENIAL
OF THOSE BLACK TOWNSHIPS
SURROUNDING IT.

HERE, IN THE PUBLIC CENTER
OF BOUTIQUES, CINEMAS AND
RESTAURANTS THERE IS EVEN
A BLACK MIDDLE-CLASS.

THEY CAN BROWSE THE SMART FASHION
SHOPS, IN SOME PLACES EVEN EAT AT
THE SAME RESTAURANTS
WITH MINIMAL HOSTILITY
EXPRESSED.

THEY CAN
ATTEND
UNIVERSI-
TIES.

WHITE MIDDLE-CLASS STORES AND ENTERTAINMENTS AVAILABLE WITHIN LIMITED ACCESS, BUT THEY STILL HAVEN'T ANY VOTE OVER WHO DECIDES THEIR FATE.

THEY CAN BE MIDDLE-CLASS INHABITANTS, BUT THEIR HOMES ARE STILL SUBJECT TO RELOCATION AT GOVERNMENT WHIM.

THEY CAN BE MIDDLE-CLASS CONSUMERS WHO CAN RIDE THE LONG ESCALATORS TO VARIOUS LEVELS OF OBVIOUS PROGRESS.

A CITY MEETING LIKE GOLD IN A CRUCIBLE.

THE STROKING OF NYLONED KNEE SAFELY STRIKE STRIKE, BUT IS AN INTIMACY HE EXECUTES OUT OF PERFUNCTORY OBLIGATION.

FOR STRIKE, IT IS AN ACTION EXPECTED OF HIM BY RUTH AND HIS MALE COLLEAGUES.

GORE HAD TOLD HIM TO TAKE 24 HOURS AER AFTER DELIVERING THE ENVELOPE TO SLADE'S OLD LADY.

YOU DO WHAT THE BOSS SAYS. YOU DO WHAT YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO ON R&D, GET TOGETHER WITH BROADS AND BOOZE.

I WAS SURPRISED TO GET YOUR CALL. YOU HAVEN'T BEEN IN JOHANNESBURG IN MONTHS.

SURPRISED ME, TOO. GOT ME THIS RUSH. WE CAN'T WAIT- ANOTHER-MINUTE BUSINESS CALL. AND HERE I AM.

HE WASN'T COMFORTABLE WITH CATCHUP. MAYBE HE SHOULD BECOME A HERMIT.

NO, THAT DIDN'T SUIT HIM, EITHER. HE ENJOYED THE COMPANY OF OTHER MERCS, LISTENING TO THEIR #1% CONQUESTS. THEY'D TALK ABOUT WOMEN AND NYLONED KNEES.

SOMEHOW, TALKING ABOUT WOMEN AND NYLONED KNEES STIMULATED STRIKE MORE THAN WHEN THE OPPORTUNITY CAME TO ACTUALLY TOUCH THEM.

YOU DON'T KEEP IN TOUCH.

NEITHER DO YOU, BABY. SO WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO WHILE THE BIG BAD WOLF'S AWAY?

T'CHALLA STARES FROM HIS VANTAGE POINT, HIS PULSE RACING.

HE FORCES HIMSELF TO RELAX, LET HIS BREATHING SLOW AFTER THE EFFORT OF THE LONG NIGHT'S SEARCH.



THE HUNT IS OVER. THAT IS STRIKE BELOW. THE MAN IS ONE OF THE NEW ADVERSARIES HE KNOWS BY INDIVIDUAL NAME--

--AND THIS ONE ONLY BECAUSE HE OVERHEARD GORE SAY IT WHILE BARBED WIRE AWAY RAZORED GASHES ACROSS HIS BODY.



THE GREAT CAT LEAPS--



--HAVING DETERMINED HIS EXACT LANDING PLACE.



THE WINNING TEARS, AS HE CALCULATED--

FERRAAP

...DEPOSITING HIM NEAR STRIKE, LIKE
A WRATHFUL APPARITION.

WHAT
THE--!?

YOU AREN'T SUPPOSED
TO BE HERE!

YOU'RE SUPPOSED
TO BE IN THE
BOONIES GOIN'
BANANAS OVER
MOMMY!



YOUR MISTAKE.

MAYBE GORE IS RIGHT, YOU DO
HAVE THE ATTENTION SPAN OF
A KUNG-FUT.



RUTH WONDERS WHAT
THE RISS IS GOING ON,
BUT SHE DOESN'T ASK
THE QUESTION ALOUD.

YOU'RE VERY
PANICKY,
STRIKE!

WHATEVER
HAPPENED TO
GARGUE
UNDER PRESS-
SURE?

WAS THAT
SOMETHING
YOU NEVER
HEARD OF--

--OR COULD
NEVER GIVE
UP TO?

LAST DATE WITH THIS
CREEP, TOO COLD, EVEN
HIS FINGERS ON HER
KNEE, YOU'D THINK
THAT'D BE WARM.

BUT EVEN IN
INTIMATE
TOUCH, STILL
SUCH COLD
DISTANCE.
EYES HARD
AS ICE.

RUTH STOPS
WONDERING
ABOUT WHAT
THE RISS IS
GOING ON--

--AND
STARTS
WONDER-
ING ABOUT
HER CHOICE
IN MEN--

--BUT SHE
DOES NOT VOICE
THAT QUESTION
OUT LOUD EITHER.





AT FIRST, STRIKE IS NOT SURE WHERE THE WARM BLOOD IS COMING FROM. HE IS COMEDED AS TO WHOSE BLOOD IT IS --

-- UNTIL THE SHREDDED FINGER'S SHRIEK INSIDE HIS HEAD.

THE STEPS RISE TO MEET THEM, RIDGED STEEL RUSHING TO FLESH, HITTING WITH A JARRING, MUTED BEAT--

WHUCK!

WHUCK!

WHUCK!

THE STEPS DISAPPEAR INTO THE FLOOR GRATING AS IF HINGEDLY DEVoured.

IT TAKES HIM ANOTHER THREE SECONDS TO REALIZE WHY THE BLOOD SPLASHES HOT AND WET ACROSS THE BACK OF HIS HAND.

THEN HE SQUINTS IN PAINFUL HORROR, KNOWING FLESH AND BONE ARE GRINDING TOGETHER.

HE CANNOT BREATHE. HIS HAND LOOSE.

THE ESCALATOR CONTINUES ITS RELENTLESS GRIND, UNINTERRUPTED.



STRIKE STARES UP INTO GOLDEN CAT EYES. A GIVE-FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH.



YOU
AIN'T
GETTIN'
NU
NU
NU
NOTHIN'
OUT
ME?

YOU MEAN LIKE THE NAME OF THE MAN YOU AND GORE WORK FOR?



YOU AIN'T GOT... TIME... FOR HEAD-GAMES... TRY TO FAKES ME OUT.

YOU...HAVEN'T A CLUE TO THE HEAD HONCHO.



YEAH. I AIN'T
TELL
TELL
TELLIN' YOU

DIDDIY-SQUAT.

I ALREADY
KNOW WHO
YOU WORK
FOR.



OF COURSE I DO.

YOU'RE A...LOT
OF...MOUTH.

YOU ARE A FOOLISH
MAN. YOU'RE IN
NO POSITION TO
MAKE ME ANGRIER
THAN I AM.

IF YOU WERE TO MAKE
ME ANGRIER, ALL IT
WOULD ACCOMPLISH
IS FORCING ME TO HURT
YOU WORSE THAN YOU
ALREADY ARE.

TIME'S ON MY SIDE.
THE FEDERALS
WILL BE HERE ANY
...MINUTE.

TRUE. BUT
BY THEN, I
WILL BE
GONE, AND
THIS WILL
BE OVER.

YOUR EMPLOYER IS
THE MAGISTRATE OF
COMMUNICATIONS...



ANTON
...PRETORIUS.

HOW'D YOU...HOW'D YOU KNOW THAT?
HE'S WAAAY...IN THE BACKGROUND...AN'
GORE...HE WOULDN'T...HAVE TOLD YOU.

NO, BUT YOU JUST CONFIRMED MY
SUSPICIONS. I WAS NOT A 100%
SURE IT WAS PRETORIUS --

--THOUGH
THE EVIDENCE
ONCE I HAD A
CHANCE TO GIVE
IT RUMINATION,
INDICATED HE
AT LEAST
KNEW HER.

SURE YOU CAN. JUST LIKE
I CAN PUT YOUR ARM BACK
INTO THE ESCALATOR GRATING.

I WOULD NOT
WANT TO DO
IT, BUT I CAN
DO IT.

YOUR
CHOICE.

NOW YOU WILL TELL ME
WHERE PRETORIUS LIVES.

CAN'T

DO THAT.

WHAT THE #!%? WHERE
HE LIVES NO SECRET. NO
NEED LOSIN' MORE FINGERS
FOR NOTHING. IT'S COMMON
KNOWLEDGE HE LIVES ON
DEVIL'S PEAK OVER...

I KNOW WHERE
IT IS. IT
OVERLOOKS
CAPETOWN.

YOU
WOULDN'T'VE
DONE IT,
WOULD YOU?
MY ARM,
I MEAN.

THE GREAT CAT'S
EYES BURN--

--A CAT'S UN-
FATHOMABLE
SECRETS LOCKED
IN JAGGED DEPTHS--

BE GLAD YOU DID
NOT HAVE TO FIND
OUT. IF YOU SPEAK
WITH YOUR FRIENDS,
TELL THEM NOT TO
COUNT ON MY
COMPASSION OR
RELUCTANCE TO
VIOLENCE.

I AM GOING TO
FIND MY MOTHER,
AND NOW THAT I
KNOW ~~WHERE~~ SHE
IS, NO ONE IS
GOING TO
STOP ME.

ANYONE
WHO GETS
IN MY WAY
IS FAIR
GAME.
TELL GORE
THAT.

AND THE
GREAT
CAT--

--LEAVES THE
BESIEGED
PLEASURE
SEEKERS--

--AND THE
CITY OF
GOLD.

CONTINUED
NEXT ISSUE--

GROND *Central Station*

ALL SET--TO
CELEBRATE MAKO'S
NEWBORN MADNESS...

HNH--GREAT
PLACE BUT HARDLY
THE TIME, NOT WHEN
THE BIRTHDAY BOY HIM-
SELF HAS FLOWN THE
COOP... MAYBE TO CRASH
HIS OWN PARTY AND
DESTROY US ALL.

BUT
TOO LATE
NOW--BLIZZ
AND DRONE, JUST
LIKE NAIM...FROM
ABOVE, GETTING
LOUDER...

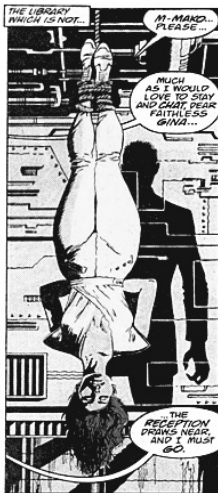
"THE LOCUSTS
SHOOTING DOWN--
TO FEAST IN
FABULOUS
RUINS..."

"THE ARRIVAL OF
THE GUESTS...
MINUS ONE."

RISE AND SHINE STARKING:

COLOBLOOD

**CHAPTER
7**





REPEAT: PRESENT COURSE
SUICIDAL; A GOOD SOLDIER
DOES NOT RETURN TO
ENEMY TERRITORY HE
HAS JUST ESCA--



YOU FORGET,
COMPUTER--
I'M DEAD NOW.

AND
THIS
TIME--

AN EXAGGERATION DESIGNED TO PROMOTE
MAKO'S CREDIBILITY; YOU CANNOT HOPE TO
OPPOSE ALL HIS RESOURCES ON YOUR OWN.

... LET'S SKIP
THE WALL.



ADVERSARY'S KNOWN ASSETS: TWELVE TANKS,
SEVENTEEN ROBOTIC WEAPON-UNITS, ONE
HUNDRED FULLY-ARMED HUMAN TROOPS--

SO MAKO'S GOT HIMSELF A SMALL
REGIMENT-- AND I'VE BEEN TURNED
INTO A ONE-MAN ARMY.



MAYBE NOT,
BUT ONE
GINA DYSON
THE ATTEMPT.

BECAUSE YOU THINK YOU
LOVE HER, BUT I HAVE
ALREADY INFORMED YOU--

EVEN IF IT
CAN'T BE THE
SAME, MY GUT
HASN'T CHANGED

EVEN KNOWING IT WAS
SHE WHO CONVERTED YOU
TO A COLD-BLOODED
CYBORG?

IF SHE
HADN'T DONE
IT, I'D BE
DEAD--

"... I OWE HER."

YOU BETRAYED
MAKO, GINA.

YOU FREED HIS
GREATEST CREATION
AND TURNED IT
AGAINST HIM, GINA.

YOU WILL BOTH
REGRET IT,
GINA.

< NATIONALISM IS DEAD ? >

< THE NOTION OF SEPARATE COUNTRIES IS OBSOLETE AND COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE IF NOT DANGEROUS. >

WHY SHOULD MEANINGLESS LINES ON A MAP CREATE WARS AND RUIN BUSINESS ?

IF A COLA COMPANY CAN PROFITABLY SELL SOFT DRINKS IN WASHINGTON AND MOSCOW, THEN STRIFE BETWEEN THE AMERICANS AND THE SOVIETS IS RIDICULOUS--UNTHINKABLE

WE'VE GOT TO ENSURE A ONE-WORLD FUTURE, AND IT MUST BE GOVERNED BY THE LOGIC AND SANITY OF THE BOTTOM LINE-- BY US.

YES...WHO ELSE, IF NOT MULTI-NATIONAL CORPORATIONS?

VERY WELL-- BUT I'M STILL NOT SURE WE NEED AN ARMY...

ONLY A SECRET ARMY, HELD IN RESERVE FOR POSSIBLE EMERGENCIES, AND IT'S NOT REALLY AN ARMY. THINK OF THEM AS EMPLOYEES' SECURITY GUARDS.

BEST OF ALL, NOW THAT MARK HAS SUCCEEDED THESE EMPLOYEES WILL BE SOLDIERS INCAPABLE OF FEAR--OR COMPLAINING ABOUT THEIR PAY.

WHAT PAY? WE'LL OWN THEM.

EXACTAMENTE.

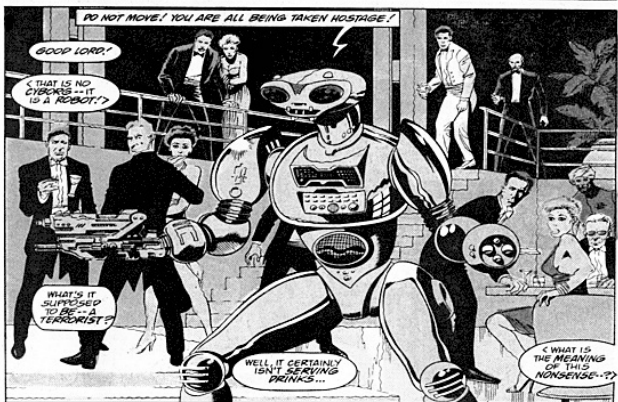
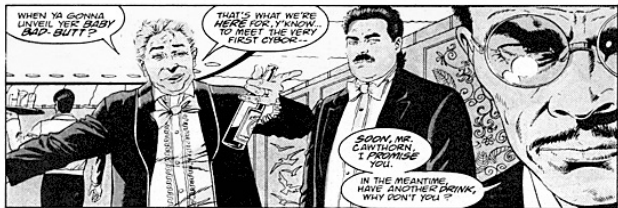
COLD BLOOD'S STILL NOT HERE MARK-- AND YOU'RE REALLY GOING THROUGH WITH YOUR 'CONTINGENCY PLAN'?

UNDER THE FESTIVE CIRCUMSTANCES, CHARLES HAVE LITTLE CHOICE.

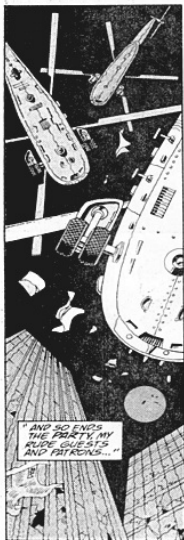
THEY MAY NOT LIKE IT...

THEN LET THEM EAT--

HEY, MARK--!







THE DREADED DEADLINE DOOM!

* TRANSLATED FROM
THE JAPANESE.

STARRING: **SUNFIRE**



AT LAST, THE PERFECT CRIME! I SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT TO COME TO JAPAN YEARS AGO!
THERE ARE NO SUPER HEROES HERE!



EEEE! THE SIDEWALK
HAS SUDDENLY BURST
INTO FLAMES!



CORRUPTOR, WHAT
SHOULD WE DO?



THROW DOWN YOUR
WEAPONS!

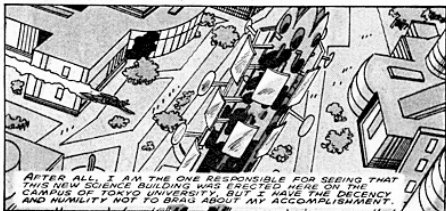
FLAMING SIDEWALKS! WHO
COULD HAVE KNOWN?!



"NO SUPER HEROES" INDEED! THOSE AMERICAN
SUPER VILLAINS ARE SO ARROGANT.



IF ONLY ALL THE WORLD
WERE AS HUMBLE AS I.



AFTER ALL, I AM THE ONE RESPONSIBLE FOR SEEING THAT
THIS NEW SCIENCE BUILDING WAS ERECTED HERE ON THE
CAMPUS OF TOKYO UNIVERSITY, BUT I HAVE THE DECENCY
AND HUMILITY NOT TO BRAG ABOUT MY ACCOMPLISHMENT.



NOW THAT I HAVE LANDED ON THE ROOFTOP OF AN ADJOINING BUILDING --



--I WILL STIMULATE THE UNSTABLE MOLECULES IN THIS COSTUME OBTAINED DURING MY BRIEF TENURE WITH THE X-MEN--



--SO THAT I WILL BE ABLE TO ATTEND THE DEDICATION OF THE BUILDING AS THE EVEN MORE HUMBLE SHIRO YOSHIDA, STUDENT.

NOW I WILL DESCEND THE STAIRCASE SO THAT I MIGHT CROSS THE BANQUET HALL AND ATTEMPT TO CONVERSE WITH KISHI GRAMOSHA, JAPAN'S MOST RESPECTED BUSINESSMAN.

SHIRO! SHIRO! COME OVER HERE TO WHERE I AM WAVING TO YOU!



AS A FRENCH FOREIGN-EXCHANGE STUDENT, I AM NOT FAMILIAR WITH THAT PERSON. WHO IS THAT OLD GUY OVER THERE?



"Old guy"?

ERIN, I WILL LET YOU KNOW THAT JUST TO BE IN THE SAME ROOM WITH KISHI GRAMOSHA IS CONSIDERED A GREAT HONOR.



HE LOOKS VERY HAPPY TO SEE YOU AGAIN, ALSO.



LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I WOULD NOW LIKE TO INTRODUCE THE MAN WHO HAS MADE OUR NEW SCIENCE BUILDING POSSIBLE -- DR. KISHI GRAMOSHA!

**MOST HONORED ASSEMBLAGE, TODAY
BEGINS A NEW ERA IN THE PROUD
HISTORY OF JAPAN**



YEHN! YEHN!

**THE GLOBAL VILLAGE, IN WHICH
WE LIVE HAS FALLEN ON DARK
TIMES--PEOPLE ARE STARVING,
COUNTRIES ARE AT WAR WITH
EACH OTHER, THE ENVIRONMENT
IS BEING DESTROYED BY CORPORATE
EXPLOITATION OF NATURAL
RESOURCES.**



HUH? WHA--? HUH?



**THE MOMENT HAS COME FOR
THE LAND OF THE RISING
SUN TO LIGHT THE WAY!**



**EEEE! WE ARE BLINDED! THE
LIGHT--WE CANNOT SEE!**



**I AM PROUD TO
INTRODUCE--THE
END OF WORLD.**



**I AM PROUD TO INTRO-
DUCE--OUR SALVATION.**



IMAGINE IF YOU WILL, A WORLD, RAVAGED BY THE DESTRUCTIVE POWER OF ITS OWN SUN! JAPAN WILL BE HONORED BY BEING THE FIRST COUNTRY TO FALL SO THAT A DEADLINE MIGHT BE ESTABLISHED!



THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD WILL BE FORCED TO SET ASIDE THEIR PETTY DIFFERENCES AND UNITE IN AN EFFORT TO STOP THE CHAIN REACTION THAT WILL EVENTUALLY DESTROY EVERY MAJOR CITY IN THE WORLD.



WHAT BEGAN AS A SIMPLE "SCIENCE BUILDING" WILL BECOME THE FIRST INCISION IN THIS OPERATION TO SAVE OUR PLANET! IT WILL CUT DEEP INTO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH ITSELF!



I RELUCTANTLY ASSUMED THE ROLE OF DEADLINE, AND CHOSE TOKYO AS THE FIRST CITY MARKED FOR DEMOLITION, BECAUSE AS EVERYONE KNOWS-- JAPAN HAS NO SUPER HEROES.



THAT DOES IT!

SHIRO?!



I, SUNFIRE, WILL STOP THIS MADNESS WITH A DOUBLE-FISTED BLAST OF MY ATOMIC FLAME!



THERE! THAT SHOULD OBLITERATE DEADLINE'S DOOMSDAY DEVICE!



UH...

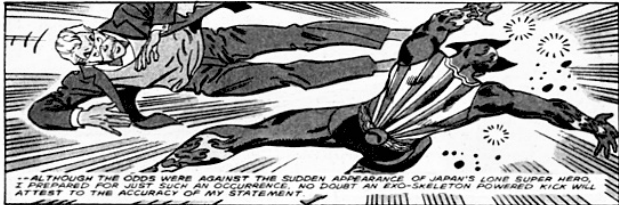


THEN AGAIN--



INCREDIBLE! MY BLASTS HAD ABSOLUTELY NO EFFECT!

OF COURSE! SUNFIRE--



--ALTHOUGH THE ODDS WERE AGAINST THE SUDDEN APPEARANCE OF JAPAN'S LONE SUPER HERO, I PREPARED FOR JUST SUCH AN OCCURRENCE. NO DOUBT AN EXO-SKELETON POWERED KICK WILL ATTEST TO THE ACCURACY OF MY STATEMENT.



IF IT IS OF ANY COMFORT TO YOUR BRUISED EGO, CHILD, YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT YOU WERE AT LEAST A CONSIDERATION.



THIS MUST STOP, DEADLINE. THIS IS INSANITY!



INSANITY?! IT IS MORE INSANE TO SIT BACK AND LET A WORLD DESTROY ITSELF OUT OF IGNORANCE AND APATHY! AT LEAST MY WAY WILL INSURE THAT THE PEOPLE WILL HAVE TO USE THEIR COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE--THEY'LL HAVE TO CARE--IF THEY INTEND TO SAVE THEMSELVES.



HOW SAD--WHEN I FIRST DESIGNED THIS STRUCTURE, I HAD ALMOST HOPED THAT THE POWER OF SUNFIRE WOULD ACTUALLY BE ENOUGH TO STOP ME!



GLUB GLUB.

OH, NO YOU
DON'T, SHIRO!

WE HAVE EVEN LESS SUPER
HEROES IN FRANCE THAN YOU DO
HERE IN JAPAN, BUT ISN'T THIS
THE POINT WHERE YOU PULL OUT
ALL THE STOPS AND DESTROY
THE DOOMSDAY DEVICE AT THE
LAST POSSIBLE INSTANT?

YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND, ERIN!
CALL HIMSELF WHAT HE WILL.
THAT IS STILL KISHI GRAMOSNA!
HE FEARS NOTHING!

LEAST OF
ALL, ME.

BULLSUSH! HE'S
INTIMIDATING
YOU AND YOU ARE
BELIEVING IT!

LOOK HOW FAR AWAY HE STANDS FROM THE HEAT-RAY! HE
IS AS HUMAN AS YOU AND I. WELL, AS I ANYWAY...

HE DID SAY THERE WAS SOME WAY
TO STOP HIM...

THAT'S THE SPIRIT! NOW GET IN THERE,
AND DO WHATEVER IT IS YOU DO! AFTER
ALL, YOU DON'T WANT JAPAN TO BE
KNOWN AS THE COUNTRY THAT
DESTROYED THE WORLD--DO YOU?

CERTAINLY NOT!



NOW THAT I'M IN THE CENTER OF THE DREADED DEADLINE'S DOOMSDAY DEVICE, THE HEAT IS UNBEARABLE EVEN FOR ME! BUT MAYBE FROM THIS VANTAGE POINT I CAN USE MY MUTANT ABILITY TO COLLECT SOLAR ENERGY--



--AND CHANNEL IT DIRECTLY INTO THE DEVICE ITSELF! I'LL CREATE A COUNTER-PULSE THAT WILL CAUSE FEEDBACK THAT IS ALMOST CERTAIN TO DESTROY THE ENTIRE "SCIENCE BUILDING!"



I MUST HURRY! THERE ARE ONLY MOMENTS LEFT BEFORE THE HEAT-RAY PIERCES THE CORE OF THE EARTH! IF I'M LUCKY, I'LL HAVE JUST ENOUGH TIME TO GET--



--AWAY.



YEEAAAAHHH! YOU DID IT, SUNFIRE! YOU DID IT!



IT APPEARS I UNDERSTIMATED THE YOUTH OF THIS COUNTRY AT LEAST I HAVE ACCOMPLISHED MY GOAL OF MAKING PEOPLE AWARE OF THE CRISIS THEY FACE, WHICH OF COURSE WAS MY ORIGINAL PLAN.



DO YOU BELIEVE THE NERVE OF THAT MAN? HERE YOU DEFEATED HIM PAIN AND SQUARE, AND HE MAKES IT SOUND LIKE IT WAS HIS PLAN ALL ALONG!



HIS ARROGANCE AMAZES ME. HE SHOULD CONSIDER HIMSELF FORTUNATE THAT I WENT EASY ON HIM. THERE WAS A MOMENT THERE WHEN I LOST MY TEMPER, THAT I WAS GOING TO--

THE END

MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS

Dear Marvel,

It's been a full year now and I still really enjoy MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS. Issue #24 was definitely no exception. For the first time in a long time, I can safely say that I even like all four stories contained within. Now on to specifics...

I really enjoyed every installment of "The Retribution Affair." Each story held my interest, and made me want to read the next one. The last segment was the best in my opinion. Bob, you really did a good job with this one. Why'd you have to kill Conscience, though? I was really beginning to like him! Ron Lim and Jeff Albrecht did a really good job, too. This all-action issue looked great. I hope Banshee's powers are back permanently. He'd look good back in the X-Men again.

"Panther's Quest" is still continuing to hold my interest, too. How can it not with that great team that works on it? Don McGregor's new creation, Zanti Chikane, is a great character. I think he really shows what life must be like for the black man in South Africa. I hope he doesn't die (like Conscience did, sniff, sniff) in the course of this series. That would really upset me. Anyway, Gene and Tom are still doing a great job also. Those guys can really tell a story.

The Shamrock story was pretty interesting. It was kind of depressing, though, don't you think? Scott Lobdell has shown that he can write many different types of stories. This one is a far cry from the El Aguija story he wrote some time ago. Hey, Scott, does this mean you have some more Shamrock stories in the works? I hope so, because I never seen Dennis Jensen's work before, but if this is any indication, I want to see more! The way the mood of this story was conveyed in the art was excellent. Good job, fellows, even if it was quite a downer.

And last but not least, I must say that I'm looking forward to future installments of "Pharaoh's Legacy" with great interest. I've always been a Havok fan (HAVOK AND WOLVERINE looks awesome), and this looks like it'll really be good. Howard Mackie looks like he has another winner on his hands (I was one of the people who read AIR RAIDERS, and I was waiting to see a new series from him, not just those fill-in stories for IRON MAN and POWER PACK), and I for one am going to stick around and see how this turns out. Even though I'm not a big Rich Buckler fan, his stuff here looks pretty good. I guess that's Joe Rubinstein's doing. Well, whatever it is, keep it up!

Well, happy anniversary, guys, and I hope you celebrate a lot more in the future. I'll be right there with you!

Victor DuPree
Fresno, CA

Wow, thanks for all of your compliments, Victor. You've really covered everyone with your praise in this letter. Boy, proud new father Howard Mackie now has three things in life to be really happy about: his new daughter, Samantha, his lovely wife, Deborah, and his most adoring fan, Victor. Hope we hear from you again many years down the line, too!

Dear Marvel,

I felt like writing to you guys when I started reading your comics, but I didn't. Now I must comment on the Cyclops story. "The Retribution Affair." I mean, you guys at MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS can write, draw, and color good fight stories. I also enjoyed "Panther's Quest" as much as I did Cyclops! I just finished issue #24, and I look forward to #25.

Now it's time for me to go. In short, keep up the good work.

Jose Macasocol
2023 Folsom St. #2
San Francisco, CA 94110

Short and sweet, Jose. Thanks!

Dear Marvel,

I have read MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS since issue #1, and I am impressed. I didn't expect it to be all that great, but the stories are interesting, the artwork is good, and the suspense at each cliff-hanger ending is pure torture. I have loved almost all of the features, but those of the title characters are, of course, the best. The Wolverine story was excellent, the Colossus story pretty good, the Cyclops story awesome, and the Havok story shows promise.

I have to say that "The Retribution Affair," starring Cyclops, was my favorite, especially in the last few issues. Issue #24 was the best of these. The use of Banshee was both welcomed and unexpected. He was the last person I expected to save the day! Mr. Harras, I salute you. When Banshee came screaming onto the page, with his long-abandoned powers restored, I was so excited I almost cried. It's been too long since that sonic power was heard, and I hope this isn't just a temporary side-effect of the antidote, as Mora MacTaggart suggested. I sincerely hope his powers are back for good and Banshee will be seen among the ranks of the X-Men again, or maybe X-Factor. Here's hoping!

But regardless of Sean's fate, MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS has become regular reading for me, and I hope the quality never changes, because it's perfect just the way it is! If this continues, MCP will certainly number as many issues as the X-MEN. See you soon...

Geoff Sims
821 Northwest Cove
Dyersburg, TN 38024

Only time will tell if Banshee's powers are permanent, Geoff (and Victor). And don't be surprised if you see him showing up in the pages of one of your favorite mutant books sometime in the near future (just don't tell anyone you heard that here, okay?).

Dear Terry,

Having just finished issue #24 of MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS I felt it my duty to write and tell you all how wonderful the book is and looks like it will be going on.

"The Retribution Affair" came to a very

explosive (ha ha) ending. I was actually sorry to see it end. I very much enjoyed Bob's stories. They were always suspenseful and well written. The thought provoking theme of prejudice against a superior race of humans was very well done and I looked forward to the next issue to see how it would continue. The art team, much like the writer, was very good. I have liked Ron's stuff since I first read *Ex-Mutants*. I was glad to see that he was doing the artwork and I enjoyed every frame of the story. I hope that he will be doing more stories for this book.

"Panther's Quest" is just beyond me. I believe that T'Challa is looking for his mother. Am I right? But what gets me is that he just gets into deeper and deeper trouble that is so incomprehensible for a comic-book character. And I'm not too thrilled with the artwork either.

"I Haven't Got Time For The Pain" was really great. Too bad that it's only one story. Since I'm just getting into Marvel, this was a good introduction to the character. The beginning monologue was written in such a way as to make it possible for a newcomer like me to know what her whole life story is about. The whole story was very good and well written. Filled to the top with action and suspense. The artwork was very enjoyable, also.

But I think the big story in this issue was Havok's serial, "Pharaoh's Legacy." Good, good stuff. I bet there is a deeper mystery behind Leila's story than she told. I can't wait to find out what it is. The ending was very good. I can't wait for the next issue to see what happens to our pair of adventures.

Well, in closing, I am very happy with the new ongoing serial, and hope that the next many will be as good as this one and the previous ones. Overall, the book has been a joy to read, and I will continue to read the book as long as the high-standard that has been shown in the past and present continues into the future. See you next issue. Keep up the great work.

Galen S. West
Ponderosa Hall #23A
Fresno State University
Fresno, CA 43710

We'll try, Galen. Meanwhile, why don't you and Victor get together! We don't think it's too often that two readers from Fresno meet in the same letters page, so make the most of it!

Dear Marvel,

I have only two words for you people: GHOST RIDER! GHOST RIDER! GHOST RIDER! GHOST RIDER!

And I don't mean that cowboy dude, either. I mean Zarathos, demonic spirit of vengeance. A nice little story in MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS would satisfy me until he returns to his own series. The world just isn't the same without his cackling laugh. Well, whaddya say?

Christopher W. Rice
12 Joan Avenue
Centereach, NY 11720

We'll think about it, Christopher...



**BLACK
PANTHER**
STUCK
IN THE HEART OF THE CITY!



SUNFIRE!
VS. THE DREADED DEADLINE DOOM!



COLDBLOOD
IN WARGAMES!